

B.) AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (canceled)

Claim 2. (currently amended) A collective procurement management system comprising:

a processor; and

a memory in communication with the processor, the memory storing a plurality of processing instructions that enable the processor to:

generate a profile for each of a plurality of purchasers based on their purchasing characteristics over a period of time, the profile characteristics including types of items ordered, quantities of items ordered, location and shipping needs;

generate a profile for each of a plurality of sellers based on types of items provided, industry type, payment methods used, order shipment time and credit rating;

provide to each of the plurality of sellers a macro for automatically uploading a catalog of items available for purchase, including a minimum price and a minimum order size of each of the items;

provide the minimum price and the minimum order size to the plurality of purchasers prior to a submission of a purchase request;

receive a purchase request from each of a the plurality of purchasers for an item, each purchase request including a at least one separate purchase price for an the item, a separate quantity of the item, and a separate delivery condition for the item;

receive, from at least one seller each of a plurality of sellers, a bid for a supply commitment for the item, the supply commitment each bid including a plurality of supply

prices for the item, each supply price corresponding to a quantity of the item to be included in an order;

group said plurality of purchase requests, based on the item and the purchase price, into a collective procurement order;

identify at least one of the plurality of sellers for supplying the item for the collective procurement order based on the received bids;

identify a final supply price for the collective procurement order based on the ordered quantity of the item in the collective procurement order and the received bids supply commitment; and

fulfill said collective procurement order by matching at least one of the identified suppliers with respect to each at least one of said plurality of purchasers, based on a comparison of the profile of each purchaser with the with the profile of each identified supplier, and further based on each requested purchase price and received delivery condition compared to the supply commitment received for each identified supplier ~~supply commitments~~, at least one of said purchase requests being fulfilled at the final supply price when the final supply price is lower than the purchase price included in a said purchase request.

Claim 3. (previously presented) The system of claim 2, said memory further comprising an inventory database including a listing of at least one item available for purchase by the plurality of purchasers.

Claim 4. (previously presented) The system of claim 2 wherein the processor groups each purchase request based on a similar item requested by the plurality of purchasers.

Claim 5. (previously presented) The system of claim 2 wherein the processor groups each purchase request only if the purchase requests specify the same item.

Claim 6. (previously presented) The system of claim 2 wherein the processor fulfills the collective procurement order if the plurality of purchase requests satisfy at least one threshold condition.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The system of claim 6, said threshold condition including a minimum number of purchasers in the collective procurement order.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The system of claim 6, said threshold condition including a minimum quantity of requested items in the collective procurement order.

Claim 9. (previously presented) The system of claim 6, said threshold condition including a minimum total order price for the collective procurement order, the total order price based on the plurality of purchase prices and a number of requested items in the collective procurement order.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A method for fulfilling a collective procurement order between at least one supplier and a plurality of purchasers, the method comprising:

generating a profile for each of a plurality of purchasers based on their purchasing characteristics over a period of time, the profile characteristics including types of items ordered, quantities of items ordered, location and shipping needs;

generating a profile for each of a plurality of sellers based on types of items provided, industry type, payment methods used, order shipment time and credit rating;

providing to each of the plurality of sellers a macro for automatically uploading a catalog of items available for purchase, including a minimum price and a minimum order size of each of the items;

providing the minimum price and the minimum order size to the plurality of purchasers prior to a submission of a purchase request;

receiving a purchase request from each of a plurality of purchasers for an identified item, the purchase request including a at least one separate purchase price for an identified item, a separate quantity of the identified item, and a separate delivery condition for the identified item;

receiving a supply commitment from at least one supplier for the identified item, the supply commitment including a plurality of supply prices, each supply price corresponding to a quantity of the item to be included in an order;

selectively grouping said plurality of purchase requests, based on said identified item and the purchase price, to create a collective procurement order;

~~identifying a final supply price for the collective procurement order based on the ordered quantity of the item in the collective procurement order and the supply commitment; and fulfilling said collective procurement order between said at least one supplier and said plurality of purchasers, based on each purchase price received from each of the plurality of purchasers and received supply commitments, at least one of said purchase requests being fulfilled at the final supply price when the final supply price is lower than the purchase price included in a purchase request~~

receiving, from each of a plurality of sellers, a bid for a supply commitment for the identified item, each bid including a plurality of supply prices for the identified item, each supply price corresponding to a quantity of the identified item to be included in an order;

grouping said plurality of purchase requests, based on the identified item and the purchase price, into a collective procurement order;

identifying at least one of the plurality of sellers for supplying the identified item for the collective procurement order, based on the received bids;

identifying a final supply price for the collective procurement order based on the quantity of the identified item in the collective procurement order and the received bids; and

fulfilling said collective procurement order by matching at least one of the identified suppliers to at least one of said plurality of purchasers, based on a comparison of the profile of each purchaser with the with the profile of each identified supplier, and further based on each requested purchase price and received delivery condition compared to the supply commitment received for each identified supplier, at least one of said purchase requests being

fulfilled at the final supply price when the final supply price is lower than the purchase price included in said purchase request.

Claim 11. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein ~~said collective procurement order is fulfilled by a plurality of suppliers~~, each of said suppliers ~~fulfilling~~ fulfill at least a portion of said collective procurement order each purchase request.

Claim 12. (canceled)

Claim 13. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, said fulfilling further comprising:

fulfilling the collective procurement order only if a minimum total quantity of the identified item is ordered from the plurality of purchase requests.

Claim 14. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, said fulfilling further comprising:

fulfilling said collective procurement order only if a minimum number of purchasers are grouped.

Claim 15. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, said fulfilling further comprising:

fulfilling the collective procurement order only if a minimum total order price is established for the collective procurement order, based on the plurality of purchase requests.

Claim 16. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said purchase price received from each of said purchasers includes a plurality of prices, each price corresponding to different quantities of the identified item in the purchase request.

Claim 17. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, further comprising:
receiving at least one acceptable price from the at least one supplier, each acceptable price corresponding to a total quantity of the identified item in the collective procurement order.

Claim 18. (canceled)

Claim 19. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, each said purchase request specifying at least one additional purchase condition in connection with the identified item.

Claims 20-35. (canceled)

Claim 36. (currently amended) ~~A method~~ An apparatus for completing collective procurement management orders, comprising:

~~receiving a purchase request from each of a plurality of purchasers, each purchase request including a purchase price and a quantity of an item;~~

~~receiving a supply commitment from for the identified item from each of a plurality of suppliers, each supply commitment including a plurality of supply prices, each supply price corresponding to a quantity of the item to be included in an order;~~

~~grouping said purchase requests into a collective procurement order, based on the requested item and the purchase price;~~

~~identifying a final supply price for the collective procurement order based on the ordered quantity of the item in the collective procurement order and the supply commitments;~~
~~and~~

~~completing the collective procurement order such that said plurality of purchase requests are fulfilled with respect to each said purchase price and received supply commitments, at least one of said purchase requests being fulfilled at the final supply price when the final supply price is lower than the purchase price included in a purchase request~~

means for generating a profile for each of a plurality of purchasers based on their purchasing characteristics over a period of time, the profile characteristics including types of items ordered, quantities of items ordered, location and shipping needs;

means for generating a profile for each of a plurality of sellers based on types of items provided, industry type, payment methods used, order shipment time and credit rating;

means for providing to each of the plurality of sellers a macro for automatically uploading a catalog of items available for purchase, including a minimum price and a minimum order size of each of the items;

means for providing the minimum price and the minimum order size to the plurality of purchasers prior to a submission of a purchase request;

means for receiving a purchase request from each of a plurality of purchasers for an identified item, the purchase request including at least one separate purchase price, a separate quantity of the identified item, and a separate delivery condition for the identified item;

means for receiving, from each of a plurality of sellers, a bid for a supply commitment for the identified item, each bid including a plurality of supply prices for the identified item, each supply price corresponding to a quantity of the identified item to be included in an order;

means for grouping said plurality of purchase requests, based on the identified item and the purchase price, into a collective procurement order;

means for identifying at least one of the plurality of sellers for supplying the identified item for the collective procurement order, based on the received bids;

means for identifying a final supply price for the collective procurement order based on the quantity of the identified item in the collective procurement order and the received bids; and

means for fulfilling said collective procurement order by matching at least one of the identified suppliers to at least one of said plurality of purchasers, based on a comparison of the profile of each purchaser with the with the profile of each identified supplier, and further based on each requested purchase price and received delivery condition compared to the supply commitment received for each identified supplier, at least one of said purchase requests being

fulfilled at the final supply price when the final supply price is lower than the purchase price included in said purchase request.

Claim 37. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ apparatus of claim 36, said purchase request including at least one additional purchase criteria.

Claim 38. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ apparatus of claim 36, further comprising:
means for notifying at least one purchaser of a pending collective procurement order based upon profile information of the ~~at least one user~~ purchaser.

Claim 39. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ apparatus of claim 36, further comprising:
means for identifying, to the at least one supplier, a number of purchase requests forming said collective procurement order, wherein said supply price is based on the number of purchase requests.

Claim 40. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ apparatus of claim 36, further comprising:
means for notifying the plurality of purchasers of an amount of time remaining prior to a closing of the collective procurement order.

Claim 41. (canceled)

Claim 42. (previously presented) The system of claim 2, said plurality of purchasers comprising at least two purchasers providing different purchase prices.

Claim 43. (canceled)

Claim 44. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, said plurality of purchasers comprising at least two purchasers providing different purchase prices.

Claim 45. (canceled)